

## TOP SHAPE

Want a chest you'll treasure?

Bust these moves.

BY JUDITH SPRINGER RIDDLE

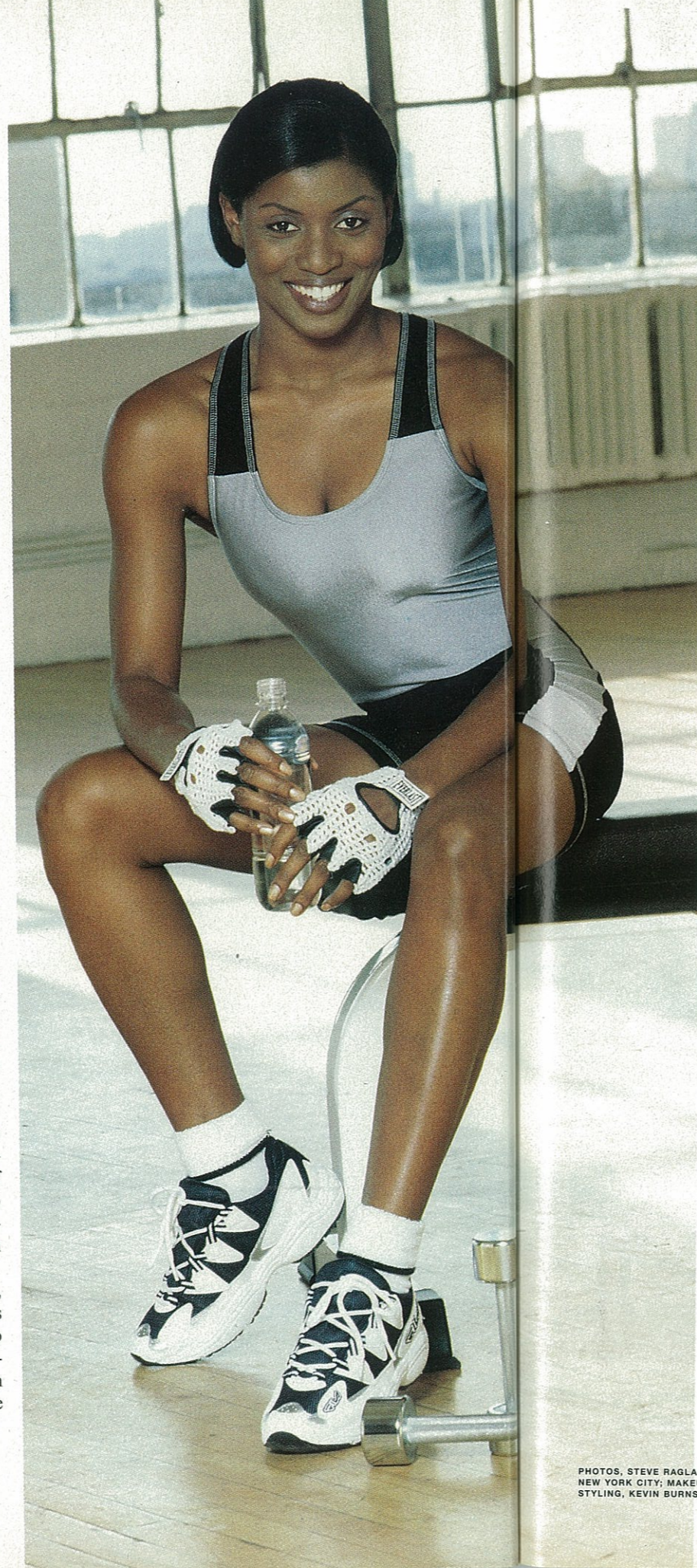
**N**eed a reason to put your best chest forward? Look no further than your mailbox, filled with the latest fashion catalogs. On those pages are the sexy low-cut and off-the-shoulder looks that are heating up for next season. Now envision yourself in one of those trendy tops, sporting sculpted shoulders; chiseled arms; satiny, bronze skin; and a beautiful bustline. Get the picture? Then place that order and prepare to get in shape with our great weight workout so that you can flaunt those slinky styles with confidence!

Of course, looking fabulous is just one of the many advantages you'll gain from strengthening your chest, shoulders, and arms. A strong upper body will put you in top form for summer sports like swimming, tennis, and volleyball. It will also promote good posture and help you maintain correct alignment while giving your breasts more support.

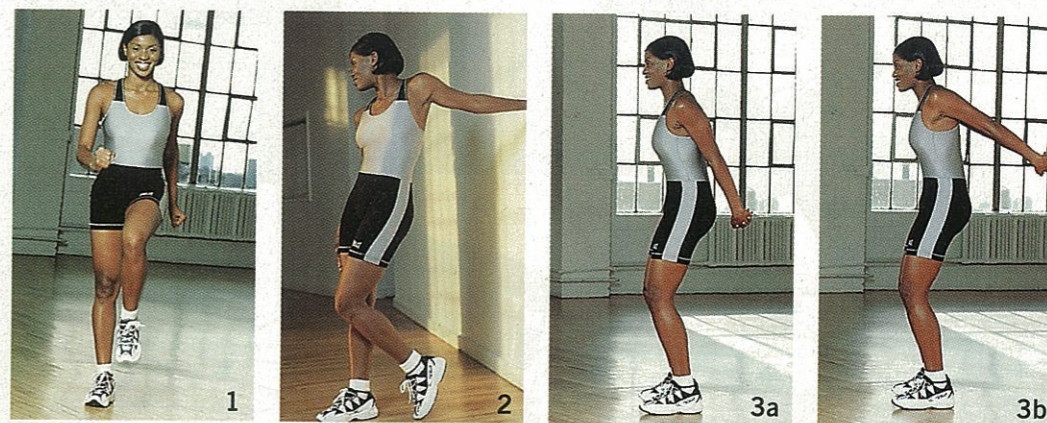
As an important extra benefit, you'll develop the strength you need on a daily basis. "Women can always use more upper-body strength, because we tend to be weak in that area," says Kacy Duke, creative consultant for Equinox Fitness Club in New York City and a HEART & SOUL fitness advisor. "Think about the physical exertion of a typical day: You might pick up a child, a tricycle, a full garbage can. You're asking a lot from your body without even thinking about it. So why not prepare it for these types of activities and prevent unnecessary injuries?" suggests Duke.

Best of all, strength training builds muscle. And the more muscle you build, the more calories you burn—day and night. In fact, adding just 2 to 3 pounds of muscle forces your body to burn at least an extra 70 to 100 calories a day—even while doing absolutely nothing. And that's not including the calories you can burn by doing the exercises shown on the following pages.

All you'll need is a pair of dumbbells, a weight bench, and a barbell with weight plates. If you don't have this equipment at home, visit your local gym or YMCA. To get the results we're talking about, perform these exercises at least two to three times a week, doing a minimum of two sets of 8 to 12 repetitions. Once you can complete more than 8 to 12 reps easily, increase the weight.



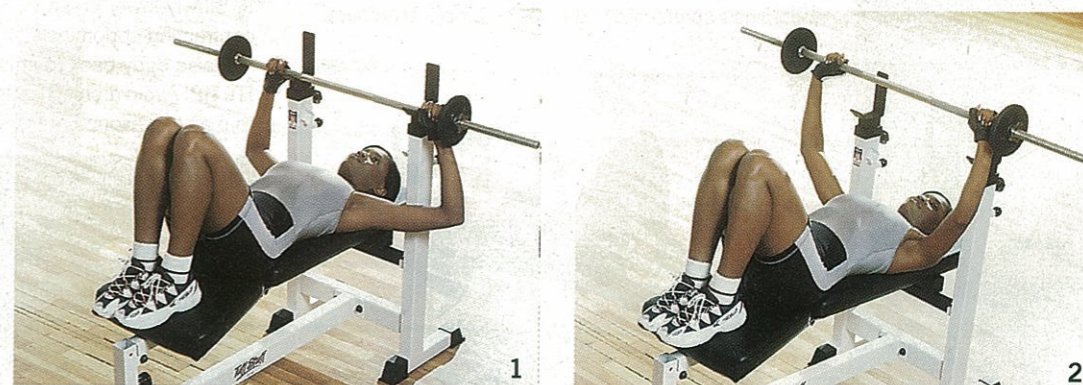
## T H E W A R M U P



Before you begin, warm up the muscle groups you plan to strengthen with these easy moves, courtesy of Donna Richardson, fitness expert for the *Tom Joyner Morning Show*, spokesperson for Nike, and a HEART & SOUL fitness advisor:

1. March in place or walk briskly for 5 minutes. Then perform these stretches:
2. Stand sideways, 3 feet from wall. Extend left arm out, slightly bent, with hand placed on wall. Slowly turn torso away from wall and hold stretch for 5 to 7 seconds. Return to starting position and repeat with right arm.
3. Stand erect with shoulders back, chest lifted, feet shoulder width apart, and knees slightly bent. (a) With arms down at sides, clasp hands behind back so that fingers are interlocked. (b) Now lift hands away from buttocks and feel stretch across chest and shoulders. Hold for 5 to 7 seconds and lower hands to starting position (a).

## T H E W O R K O U T



### C H E S T P R E S S

Strengthens the middle pectoral muscles (center chest), anterior deltoids (front of shoulder), and triceps (back of arm).

1. Lie on bench-press bench with arms extended above chest. Grasp barbell, palms facing forward. Place hands shoulder width apart or slightly wider. Rest feet firmly on ground, or place feet on bench with knees bent.
2. Keep back firmly against bench. Slowly lift barbell.
3. Lower barbell for count of 2 to middle of breastbone. Elbows should be pointed out while rest of body remains in stable position. Don't arch back or bounce bar off chest. Slowly raise barbell for count of 2 to starting position (1).

**FIT TIP:** For the bench-press exercises, start with 10-lb free weights if you're a beginner. Use a 30-lb bar if you're an intermediate exerciser, and increase the weight as you advance. Inhale as you lower the bar or free weights to your chest; exhale as you push bar or free weights up.



PHOTOS, STEVE RAGLAND; HAIR, JULIE MCINTOSH FOR GO WITH THE FLOW, NEW YORK CITY; MAKEUP, LANIER LONG FOR INTERFACE COSMETICS; STYLING, KEVIN BURNS; UNITARD AND GLOVES, EVERLAST; SNEAKERS, FILA

# bodyshaping



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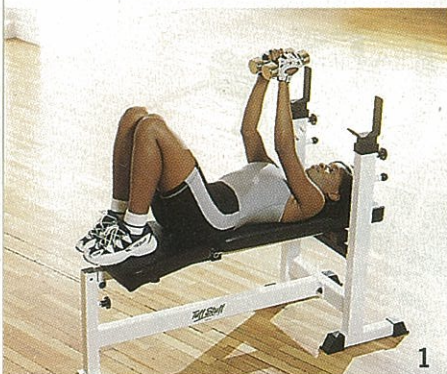


## INCLINE CHEST PRESS

*Sculpts the upper, middle, and outer pectoral muscles (whole chest) and medial and lateral deltoids (front and top of shoulder).*

1. Lie on inclined bench-press bench. Grasp barbell with palms facing forward. Place hands about shoulder width apart. Rest feet firmly on ground.
2. Keeping back against bench, slowly lift barbell.
3. Lower barbell for count of 2 to chest area, between shoulders and breasts. Elbows should be pointing out, and rest of body should stay in proper alignment. Don't arch back or bounce bar off chest. Then slowly raise barbell for count of 2 to starting position (1).

**FIT TIP:** Be sure to keep your abdominals contracted and focus on proper alignment.



1



2

## DUMBBELL FLIES

*Tones the middle pectoral muscles (center of chest) and anterior deltoid (front of shoulder).*

1. Lie on bench with legs together and feet firmly on bench. Hold two dumbbells above you, palms facing each other. Dumbbells should be nearly touching each other above your chest. Your back should be straight and firm against bench, with elbows unlocked. This is your starting position.
2. Slowly lower dumbbells out and away from each other in semicircular motion (as if you were hugging a tree). Keep wrists straight. Lower until dumbbells are at chest level. Elbows should be slightly bent, and back should remain in contact with bench.
3. Slowly raise dumbbells, again in semicircle, to starting position.

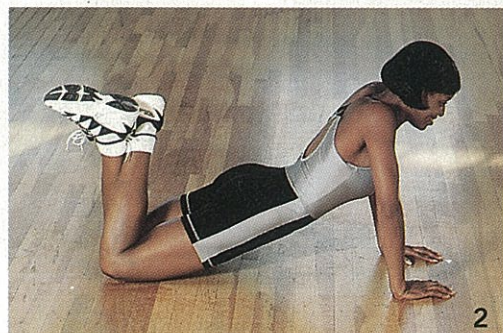
**FIT TIP:** For the dumbbell flies, select a pair of 3- to 5-lb dumbbells if you're a novice; 10- to 15-lb dumbbells if you're an intermediate or advanced exerciser. Your muscles should reach the point of exhaustion by the end of the set. Rest for 45 to 60 seconds between sets; shorten the rest period if you want to increase the intensity.

## MODIFIED PUSH UP

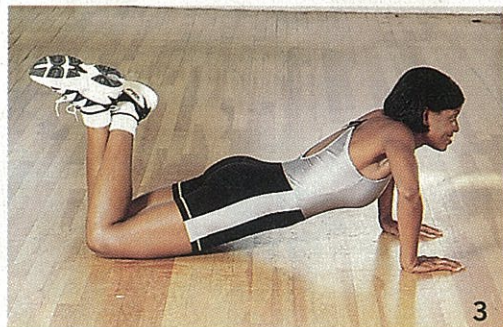
*Shapes the middle pectoral muscles (center of chest), anterior deltoid (front of shoulder), and triceps (back of arm).*

1. Get down on hands and knees and place hands shoulder width apart.
2. Cross legs at ankles, and keep head in line with neck and shoulders.
3. Slowly lower chest to 4 inches above floor while contracting abdominals.
4. Raise body back to starting position.

**FIT TIP:** Avoid arching back and pushing up buttocks to maintain alignment.



2



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**Judith Springer Riddle** is the senior research editor of *HEART & SOUL* and an avid gym rat.